



November 30, 2006

The Honorable Elizabeth Dole
United States Senate
555 Dirksen Senate Office building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Dole:

As the Senior Vice President of Global Supply Chain Operations of American & Efird, Inc. which employs approximately 1400 employees in North Carolina we are writing to you today to strongly urge your support of H.R. 6142, the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE) Act of 2006 which would provide modest trade preferences to Haiti – the poorest and only least developed country (LDC) in our hemisphere. It is our understanding that efforts are underway to craft a trade package of legislation during the lame duck session of Congress beginning December 4th. We urge you to insist H.R. 6142 is part of that package.

Notwithstanding the obvious moral reasons for passing this bill, HOPE will be good for North Carolina because it will allow our business to increase sales of sewing thread to CINTAS which uses Haiti as an apparel assembly point. However, if HOPE does not pass, CINTAS will almost certainly follow the exodus of apparel makers who have already left Haiti for Asia. Senator Dole, these sewing jobs will not come back to the United States – instead they will go to Asia. Therefore, not only will failing to pass HOPE harm Haiti, it may put in jeopardy our business in North Carolina.

On the question of transshipments, the Haitian government has repeatedly signaled its willingness to accept whatever safeguards U.S. Customs feels are appropriate. The fact is the apparel sector in Haiti has shrunk from 100,000 workers to 12,000 and will disappear completely if nothing is done to make its apparel sector competitive with Asia. Moreover, after over a decade of political unrest, Haiti finally has a democratically elected President who has made HOPE an important part of his platform. Passage of HOPE would be a tangible sign that the United States cares about our poorest neighbors.

Again, we urge you to support this legislation.

Sincerely,
American & Efird, Inc.



A. Knox Winget
Sr., VP Global Supply Chain Operations

AKW/pb

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